

SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK 1

What you need to know and do to protect children
and adults at risk from harm or abuse

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* **Safeguarding Handbooks 1-6, CrossReach Child Protection Handbook and CrossReach Adult Protection Handbook** are available to view on the Church of Scotland website:
http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/safeguarding_service/key_publications

Foreword

The Church of Scotland lives the Gospel message which declares that the least, the last and the lost should be at the heart of what we believe and how we respond in our faith. Safeguarding underpins this theological imperative to care for the most vulnerable people we engage with in our life and work. Everyone has the right to feel safe and cared for in the Church and it is also the responsibility of everyone in the Church.

Good Safeguarding tries to ensure that the risk of harm and abuse is as remote as it can be. It is important that there is not only a theological underpinning to Safeguarding, but also clear policies and procedures for everyone to know and practice to ensure that we practice what we preach.

This Handbook is here to make sure that everyone is supported and knows the policies, procedures and practices which are expected in contemporary Safeguarding within the Church in as straightforward and clear ways as possible.

I commend this Handbook to you; along with the support which the Safeguarding Service can provide. The Church of Scotland's people seek to build a place where all people may safely live life as well as they are able free from the risk of harm and abuse.

Rev. Dr. Karen Campbell, Convener, Safeguarding Committee.

Safeguarding – Ensuring a Safe Church for All

Introduction

Harm or abuse of children and adults at risk can happen anywhere – even in Church communities.

As a result, Safeguarding, protecting children and adults at risk from harm, is a permanent and necessary part of Church life. Abuse is incompatible with our Christian values and so this handbook seeks to:

- Provide an overview of what Safeguarding means in the context of the Church of Scotland
- Outline the clear procedures to be followed by individuals with regard to recognising and responding to harm or abuse or safeguarding concerns in a timely and appropriate way – the four R's
- Outline the Church of Scotland structures and roles which should be in place in local congregations and presbyteries in order to prevent harm or abuse, where possible
- Provide an overview of the support available from the Safeguarding Service

The information set out in this handbook also seeks to complement the other Safeguarding Handbooks in relation to Safe Recruitment (Safeguarding Handbook 2), Safeguarding Training (Safeguarding Handbook 3), Safeguarding Practice (Safeguarding Handbook 4), Managing those who pose a risk (Safeguarding Handbook 5) and Responding to Domestic Abuse (Safeguarding Handbook 6).

This handbook underpins the Church's Safeguarding Act which was passed by the General Assembly in 2018 (accessible on the Church of Scotland website) and complements the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Policy Statement (see appendix 1).

The Safeguarding Service will continue to maintain and regularly review the procedures set out in this policy so as to ensure they are fit for purpose and are compatible with national legislation and guidance.

Who this handbook is for

This handbook attempts to meet the needs of a very wide audience including:

Those working with children and/or adults at risk:

- Individuals working with children and/or protected adults in the Church
- Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade volunteers
- Pastoral Care Visitors
- All paid staff in the Church including all Ministries Development Staff and Ministries Council employees
- Ministers and all clergy

Those with responsibilities for the scrutiny and support of safeguarding activities

- Kirk Sessions
- Safeguarding Coordinators
- Safeguarding Presbytery Contacts
- Safeguarding Trainers
- Presbytery Clerks
- All of the above Church post holders in The Presbyteries of Scotland, England, and International Presbytery
- Other groups, within and outwith the Church, who have an interest in the delivery or outcome of our safeguarding activity

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Values and Policy

Values are the things that we hold dear or believe to be right and which govern our actions. The Church's Safeguarding values:

- **The love of Christ** compels us to care and protect those who are vulnerable in the Church and society.
- **Priority**: safeguarding children and adults at risk known to the Church.
- **Acting in the best interest of the person** affected by harm or abuse is paramount.
- **Zero tolerance**: no type or level of harm to people known to the Church or using Church services is acceptable or justifiable.
- **Duty to protect people**: we all have a duty to protect as well as a duty of care.
- **Immediate reporting**: if you suspect or witness harm or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or your line manager.
- **Safeguarding is a multi-agency activity**. The Church of Scotland will ensure that the social work department, police and health services are involved, as appropriate, when harm is witnessed, suspected or reported.
- **Communication and information sharing**: is essential within the Church of Scotland and with other agencies to promote joint decision making.
- **Confidential information sharing**: the duty to protect takes precedence over individual confidentiality if they or others are at serious risk of harm or have been seriously harmed. But information sharing will be proportional: the person will be advised before the appropriate amount of information is shared with only the minimum number of people that need to know.
- **For adults at risk of harm – balancing risks and rights**: we recognise the balance between the duty to protect and the right of the adult who has capacity to make decisions to choose to live in a situation that puts them at risk of harm. We will work with them to ensure that such risks are understood and minimised. Risk taking, with appropriate support, can be positive and life-enhancing.
- Any safeguarding intervention must be the **minimum necessary and proportionate** to the risk of abuse or harm.

What do we mean by Safeguarding in the Church?

Safeguarding is about protecting children and adults at risk in, or known to, Church congregations. Safeguarding is broader than child and adult protection and a collective approach to safeguarding aims to encourage every local church and every individual member to play their part in:

- creating and maintaining a safe environment for all especially children and adults at risk, so that the dignity of each person is respected.
- being informed about different forms of harm and abuse and how to respond appropriately, making it clear that any harm or abuse is unacceptable

The Church of Scotland's Safeguarding system seeks to adopt a preventive approach to safeguarding through:

- Safe Recruitment practices (Safeguarding Handbook 2)
- Safeguarding Training and awareness raising (Safeguarding Handbook 3)
- Safe working practices e.g. risk assessments, ensuring correct ratios of workers to children, safe use of social media (Safeguarding Handbook 4)
- Managing safe worship of those who may pose a risk (Safeguarding Handbook 5)
- Ensuring good Safeguarding Practices: See the Safeguarding Act 2018 and the Code of Good Safeguarding Practice (Appendix 2)

Where possible, the aim of the Church is to prevent harm or abuse. However, where that is not possible, we wish to ensure a timely and appropriate response to any safeguarding concerns.

Hence, the Church's key safeguarding message is the following:

If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or line manager.

Trust your intuition or gut feeling about the person or the situation – if it looks or feels wrong then it probably is. In safeguarding it is sometimes necessary to think the unthinkable about a person or situation.

We would much rather that you spoke to your Safeguarding Coordinator or line manager if you are not sure about something rather than wait until you're absolutely sure. Not sharing a concern may result in the abuse continuing.

PART 1: Child/Adult Protection and the four R's of Safeguarding

What is Child Protection?

Child protection has to be seen in the context of the wider Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach, the Early Years Framework and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people in the eight areas. These wellbeing indicators state that children and young people must be: healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included and, above all in the context of child protection, safe. The primary indicator for child protection is to keep a child safe and, in so doing, attention is given to other areas of wellbeing as appropriate.

Under the GIRFEC approach, the Named Person role will be in place for every child and will be undertaken by an individual in universal services, i.e. health or education. A Named Person will be available to listen, advise and help a child or young person and their parent(s), provide direct support or help them access other services. They will be a point of contact for other services if they have any concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing.

Child Protection is about protecting a child from child abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a likelihood or risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect.

Child protection is a central part of Safeguarding and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. For more information on the legislation and guidance that frames Child Protection in Scotland, see appendix three.

What is Adult Support and Protection?

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act, 2007 gives legal measures to statutory agencies to protect adults at risk from harm or abuse. There is a need to strike a balance between the 'need to protect' and the rights of the adult.

What is the difference between child protection and adult protection?

Although children and adults at risk can experience the same types of harm and the causes are often similar, the main difference between child protection and adult protection hinges on the right to make choices.

We all have rights to make choices and live our lives the way we want to. Sometimes we may consider that others make bad choices that put themselves and others in harmful situations. People have the right to make such choices. But where a child is at risk of serious harm or has been seriously harmed, it is likely that action would be taken by social work or the police to protect them whether or not the parent/carer or child agrees.

Sometimes adults at risk do not want social work or the police to take action to protect them from harm. Taking action to protect them *against* their wishes is a dilemma.

Although the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act, 2007 gives legal measures to protect adults at risk, the rights of the person need to be taken into account. There is a need to strike a balance between the 'need to protect' and the rights of the adult. **If in any doubt contact the Safeguarding Service for advice.**

RECOGNITION – REPORTING – RECORDING - REFERRAL

RECOGNITION

Who are we seeking to protect?

Children

In Scotland, a child legally becomes an adult when they turn 16, but statutory guidance which supports the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 includes all children and young people up to the age of 18.

Section 21 of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland explains how professionals should act to protect young people from harm in different circumstances (Scottish Government, 2014). The key message in this guidance is the following: *“Although the differing legal definitions of the age of a child can be confusing, the priority is to ensure that a vulnerable young person who is, or may be, at risk of significant harm is offered support and protection”*.

Adults at Risk

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines an adult at risk as a person aged 16 or over who:

- are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests;
- are at risk of harm; and
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

This is commonly known as the 3 point criteria. For an adult to be at risk in terms of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, the adult must meet all three points above.

In practice this means that the following groups of people may *sometimes* be at risk of harm: people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health difficulties, older people and also those who are homeless or affected by addictions. This definition is in this handbook for information only and individuals should seek advice from the Safeguarding Service.

Signs and types of harm or abuse affecting children or adults at risk

Recognising harm or abuse is often not easy. You need to act when harm or abuse is suspected and not just when you are absolutely sure that harm has occurred.

Some types of abuse may go undetected or reported for many years or never disclosed by the person affected.

Key questions to ask yourself when first presented with a potentially harmful situation: *does it look right, does it sound right or does it feel right?*

Trust your intuition or gut feeling. If it looks or feels wrong then it probably is. Report your concern to your Safeguarding Coordinator or line manager.

The following two tables summarise the main types of abuse that may be perpetrated against children and adults at risk.

1. The main types of abuse that may be perpetrated against children

Main types of abuse	Signs of these types of abuse
<p>Physical: Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Fabricated or induced illness is physical harm that may be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child they are looking after.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual or unexplained injuries. • Misuse of medication: giving too much, too little, with-holding or giving the wrong medication, or giving it late. • Fear of another person, disturbed behaviour. • Physical or electronic barriers to freedom of movement and choice; medication which limits physical movement or behaviour.
<p>Sexual abuse is any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or on in the production of indecent images or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.</p> <p>Harmful Sexual Behaviour between children and young people Some children and young people can develop harmful sexual behaviour which harms others and themselves. Indications of abuse include a lack of consent between the children involved, inequalities of age, development age or size; and the use of force or threats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual acts or actions involving genital contact or no physical contact. • Talking in sexual language that is inappropriate or uncomfortable. • Touching or attempting to touch in a sexual way against the person's will or understanding. • Sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse. • Lewd or libidinous practices toward a child. • Non-contact sexual activity e.g. exposing sexual parts to the child or having them witness adult sexual acts. • Rape, sodomy, incest, sexual assault and inappropriate touching of genitals.
<p>Child Sexual Exploitation: the sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 is an often hidden form of child sexual abuse, with distinctive elements of exploitation and exchange. For example, this might involve them being coerced, manipulated, forced or deceived into performing sexual activities in exchange for receiving some form of material goods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staying out late and going missing; • Multiple callers; • Excessive use of a mobile phone or multiple mobile phones; • Expressions of despair; • Disclosure of abuse followed by withdrawal of allegation; • Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies; • Drug and alcohol misuse; • Truancy or exclusion; • High number of sexual partners and/or older boyfriends • Unexplained amounts of money or other material items;

<p>Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has a severe and persistent adverse effect on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve the imposition of age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations on a child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting children. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill treatment of a child; it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure exerted by another person to do something that they do not want to do. • Depression, withdrawal, noticeable or uncharacteristic changes in behaviour, less communicative. • Fear of another person. • Hostile or rejecting behaviour by the care-giver. • Kept isolated from other people or depriving them of health or social care services.
<p>Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.</p> <p>It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, a child's basic emotional needs.</p> <p>Neglect may also result in the child being diagnosed as suffering from 'non-organic failure to thrive', where they have significantly failed to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones and where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated.</p> <p>In its extreme form children can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation. This can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children in particular, the consequences may be life-threatening within a relatively short period of time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children • constantly dirty or 'smelly' • loss of weight, or being constantly underweight • inappropriate clothing for the conditions. • complaining of being tired all the time • not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments • having few friends • mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

<p>Self-harm: children who need protection from themselves. Their intention may be to injure self but not to endanger own life, or it may be to attempt suicide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate self-harm. • Attempted suicide. • Refusal to eat or drink. • Drug/alcohol/substance misuse. • Cutting, burning, hitting etc. parts of the body. • Calculated and dangerous risk-taking.
<p>Other types of abuse. There is no universally agreed definition of 'child abuse'. The types of behaviour defined as abusive, and the range of people deemed to be perpetrators of abuse, are continually expanding. They are defined by society's changing awareness and attitudes.</p> <p>For the most recent Scottish Government child protection guidance see The Scottish Government's National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, 2014.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised, multiple or institutional abuse: abuse by organised groups of people targeting children. Such abuse can occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community and within institutions such as residential settings, in day care and in other provisions such as youth services, sports clubs and voluntary groups. There may also be cases of children being abused via the use of the Internet. • Child trafficking is a crime involving the movement of children for the purpose of their exploitation • Online Abuse: Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. • Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. FII is also known as "Munchausen's syndrome by proxy" • Domestic abuse: Around 1 in 5 children have been exposed to Domestic Abuse. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships. Children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening are at risk of other types of abuse too. For more information on domestic abuse see Safeguarding Handbook 6. • Foetal abuse: where the foetus may be damaged in utero by the mother's tobacco, alcohol or drug use; or harm by another person physically assaulting the mother. • Children affected by drug abuse and addictions of parents/carers.

<p>Other types of abuse (continued).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health. • Forced Marriage where the child is under 16 years.
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2. The main types of harm that may be perpetrated against adults at risk

Main types of harm	Signs of these types of harm
<p>Physical: hitting, slapping, pushing, inappropriate touching, kicking, being threatened with a weapon, burned, scalded or bitten, inappropriate sanctions or holding the person down.</p> <p>Includes inappropriate restraint that is not part of an agreed plan. Restraint can be chemical (medication) or physical.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual or unexplained injuries. • Misuse of medication: giving too much, too little, withholding or giving the wrong medication, or giving it late. • Fear of another person, disturbed behaviour. • Physical or electronic barriers to freedom of movement and choice; medication which limits physical movement or behaviour.
<p>Sexual: can include any sexual activity that the person does not understand or want: degrading or inappropriate photographs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual acts or actions that are not wanted or understood and to which the adult could not, or did not, consent. • Talking in sexual language that is inappropriate or uncomfortable for the service user (non-contact sexual harm). • Touching or attempting to touch in a sexual way against the person's will or understanding. • Sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse against the person's will.
<p>Financial or material: theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure to hand over or sign over property or money, misuse of property, possessions or welfare benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained debt; not paying bills for services. • Sale of property, possessions, misuse of bank account by the perpetrator. • Pressure on the person to comply with the wishes of another about wills, property, inheritance or money.
<p>Psychological or emotional harm: threats, abandonment, humiliation, intimidation, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse, controlling behaviour, name-calling, insults, preventing the person from seeing others, misuse of authority or power over the adult at risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure exerted by another person to do something that they do not want to do. • Depression, withdrawal, noticeable or uncharacteristic changes in behavior, less communicative. • Fear of another person. • Hostile or rejecting behaviour by the care-giver. • Kept isolated from other people or from receiving health or social care services.

<p>Neglect and acts of omission: can include not being given the correct medication or care, not allowed to see a doctor or other health professional, or access to educational services; appropriate medication, food or heating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person is found alone at home or in a care setting in a situation of serious risk. • Unexplained or sudden deterioration in health e.g. weight loss, infections or pressure sores. • Rushing a person with eating their meal or not cutting up their food so that they can easily eat it. • Failure to give the correct dose of medication and at the right time. • Undue delay in getting medical care for illness or injury. • Deprived of adequate food or heating resulting in avoidable weight loss or hypothermia.
<p>Self-harm: the intention may be to injure self but not to endanger own life, or it may be to attempt suicide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refusal to eat or drink. • Drug/alcohol/substance misuse. • Cutting, burning, hitting etc. parts of the body. • Calculated and dangerous risk taking.
<p>Abuse of Human Rights: as included in the 14 Articles of the Human Rights Act, 1998. For example the prohibition of torture (article 3) and forced labour (article 4), the right to liberty and security (article 5), respect for family and private life (article 8) and freedom from discrimination (article 14).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of information or not knowing rights. • Being misinformed about rights. • Most forms of harm will be covered by the abuse of one of these Human Rights.
<p>Historical or Non-Recent Abuse Non-recent abuse (also known as historical abuse) is an allegation of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse made by or on behalf of someone who is now 18 years or over, relating to an incident which took place when the alleged victim was under 18 years old. The complainant may be an adult but could be an older young person making reports of abuse in early childhood. The reports may relate to an individual's experience in the family home, community or while they were a looked after and accommodated child in a residential, kinship or foster care setting. See the Historical Abuse Policy – appendix 4.</p>	

Who might perpetrate abuse?

Abuse can happen anywhere. It can be perpetrated by anyone. It is important to note that abuse or harm 'in the Church' should not be equated with 'abuse or harm by members of the Church'. Not all harm or abuse that happens to Church members is perpetrated by Church members.

Safeguarding activity in the Church starts when suspected or reported abuse *becomes known* to members of the Church – congregation members, paid staff or volunteers – and that information is shared with the Safeguarding Coordinator or Minister and then the Safeguarding Service.

How may suspected or actual, harm or abuse be disclosed or come to light

Disclosure is the process of finding out about alleged, reported or witnessed harm or abuse. Sometimes this information emerges gradually over a period of time; or immediately in the case of abuse that is witnessed or disclosed. Harm or abuse can come to light when:

- an incident or behaviour is seen or heard.
- an incident or behaviour is seen or heard by a member of the Church congregation who passes that information on to another person who then informs you. This is third party information.
- an anonymous allegation is received.
- a child's or adult at risk's appearance, behaviour, health or comments may cause suspicion of harm or abuse.
- a person affected by the alleged harm or abuse tells you about it. That harm may have occurred days, weeks, months or years ago.
- an investigation into the misconduct of a paid member of staff or a volunteer reveals information about a harmful incident.
- a complaint is made about a person in a position of trust or responsibility but on closer examination the complaint is actually an allegation of harmful conduct.

What do you do if harm or abuse is disclosed to you

When harm or abuse is disclosed your role is to start to gather the basic facts. It is not your role to investigate – that is the role of the police or social work in serious cases of suspected or reported abuse.

The disclosure may be sudden with a lot of information provided. Or a statement may be made which just hints at an abusive situation.

The following is a guide to finding out more about the basic facts: what happened, to whom, where, when and who was involved.

What questions to ask - using open questions

- Use the 'Little TED' questions with TED representing questions such as: Tell me about...; Explain to me; Describe to me.
- Use the 4WH questions: who; what; when; and where. For example in response to a disclosure of alleged harm 'What happened?', 'Who was there?', 'When did that happen?', 'Where did that happen?'

What to do if abuse or harm is disclosed directly to you

1. Listen to the child or adult at risk. Take what they say seriously.
2. Reassure the person – tell them they have done the right thing by telling you.
3. Remain calm no matter how difficult it is and listen to what a child or adult at risk is saying. You have been chosen because the person feels they can talk to you.
4. Be honest. Tell the child or adult at risk that you cannot keep a secret and that you have to talk to someone else who knows what to do. Don't make false promises.
5. Only ask open questions to establish the basic facts.
6. Do not investigate – that is the role of social work or the police.
7. Tell the person what you are going to do next. Always finish on a positive note.
8. Write down everything the child or adult at risk has told you, in their own words, as soon as possible *after* you have spoken with them. This is called recording (discussed later in the handbook)
9. Report what you have heard or seen.
10. Keep what you have heard or seen confidential between yourself, the person and the person to whom you report your concerns.

REPORTING

What you need to do if you witness or suspect harm or abuse or it is reported to you

Reporting is about immediately sharing appropriate information verbally, and later in writing, with the responsible people who need to know.

If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or line manager.

If you are a Safeguarding Coordinator, and harm or abuse has been reported to you, contact the Safeguarding Service for written and verbal advice.

If serious harm or abuse has happened, a crime has occurred or the person is in immediate danger, police or social work can be contacted first, and the Safeguarding Service after.

RECORDING

Guidance about recording reported, suspected or witnessed harm or abuse

The following is general guidance about best practice in relation to the recording of information about an event where harm or abuse has been disclosed. Good recording is a critical part of the safeguarding agenda.

All records must:

- be completed on the same day or within 24 hours.
- be written legibly or typed. If typed from your handwritten notes keep those notes as in some serious cases they may be used as evidence.
- dated (day, month and year) and signed* by the person who received the disclosure (*with name printed along-side).
- detailed description of the incident: what exactly happened, where, when, how, who was involved, names of witnesses, who reported and exactly what they said etc.
- Record the person's own words to describe their experience and views. If a referral is subsequently made to social work or the police this information will be needed.
- use headings to assist with case recording to avoid long essay-style writing.
- stick to recording the facts and don't record opinions. Facts are supported by evidence. Opinions are subjective and are not backed up by evidence. The absence of supporting information means that opinions cannot be tested. They may wrongly become accepted as facts.
- record the child's or adult at risk's views and wishes.
- Record who you spoke or consulted with, when, what decisions were made by whom and the reasons for those decisions.

The record should then be passed to your Safeguarding Coordinator. Safeguarding Coordinators should refer to the Data Retention Guidance from the Law Department and Data Protection guidance for Safeguarding Coordinators on the Church of Scotland Website for more information on the proper storage of these reports.

REFERRAL

Making a referral to social work or the police and what information to provide

For Church congregations it is usually the Safeguarding Coordinator who makes contact with social work or the police to share information about a safeguarding concern. This contact is known as making a referral. The police officer or social worker will let you know what information is required. But the following is a useful checklist to help you to prepare to share information:

1. Name and date of birth (if known) of child or adult at risk.
2. Address of child or adult at risk.
3. Is the child or adult at risk or their parent or carer aware of the referral and what are their views and wishes?
4. Details of witnessed, suspected or reported harm or risk of harm.

- *What* happened before, during and after the harmful event? Use the person's own words if known.
 - *When* did the event happen? Include times and full dates.
 - *Where* did it happen?
 - *Who* was allegedly involved and what did they say or do?
 - Names of witnesses.
5. If known give details of any previous concerns about witnessed, suspected or reported harm or risk of harm.

It is good practice to follow up a verbal referral with confirmation in writing. It is useful to note that all local authorities will have their own child protection and adult support and protection interagency procedures and guidance which you should refer to for your locality.

Suggested structure and process for fact-finding investigations after Police or Social Work investigations if it has involved a paid staff member or volunteer

This guidance is for use only when:

- The Church has made a safeguarding referral to the police or social work; and
- A police or social work investigation has been concluded; and
- The Kirk Session/Safeguarding Panel/employer need to then use disciplinary procedures to manage a paid member of staff or volunteer.

To save confusion there are three types of information gathering activity:

1. The Safeguarding Coordinator's gathering of basic information (who, what, where and when) when an allegation or report is first received.
2. Police and/or social work single or joint agency investigation.
3. Fact finding investigation by the employer (Kirk Session or service provider) only after (2) above and then only after the police/Procurator Fiscal have given the go-ahead.

It is not the role of the Safeguarding Coordinator, Safeguarding Panel or service provider to investigate when an allegation of abuse or harm is first made. But it is their role to gather basic information about the situation as above. It is the role of the police or social work to investigate - they determine if there is evidence, or not, to support the allegation or reported harm.

Where there is a police investigation and charges are made the level of proof required is 'beyond all reasonable doubt'. For fact finding investigations conducted by the Kirk Session/Safeguarding Panel/employer, a lower level of proof - 'on the balance of probabilities' - is used. With regard to the allegations of harm there will usually be a finding that they are:

1. Substantiated (there are facts and evidence that prove that the harm occurred).
2. Unsubstantiated (it is not known whether harm has occurred or not and often it is one person's word against that of another).
3. The allegations or suspicions are false (there are facts or evidence that determine beyond all reasonable doubt that the harm did not occur). The allegation may thus be false or malicious.

The suggested structure for a fact-finding investigation can be found in appendix 6. This can be adapted to meet your particular needs e.g. providing a report to the Kirk Session or an employer carrying out a safeguarding related investigation as part of a disciplinary procedure.

PART 2: How the Church of Scotland seeks to uphold its duties in relation to Safeguarding

We have put in place the following recommended structures, roles and responsibilities to ensure that the Church can deliver on our responsibilities and duties in relation to safeguarding

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service

This section gives an overview of the responsibilities of the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service. The associated Safeguarding Committee is responsible for governance, policy and safeguarding strategy.

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service aims to:

(a) ensure best practice in *preventing* harm or abuse to children and adults at risk and (b) ensure that the Church makes a timely and *appropriate response* when harm or abuse is witnessed, suspected or reported.

Preventing harm and abuse

The Safeguarding Service aims to *prevent harm* or abuse by ensuring that there is good recognition and reporting. The Safeguarding Service provides:

- Support and advice with every-day safeguarding matters where there is not an incident of suspected or reported harm or abuse. This work is called safeguarding enquiries.
- Advice and support for the safe recruitment and selection of all paid staff and volunteers: the process of checking a person's suitability to work with children or protected adults via membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act, 2007, (PVG Scheme). Safe recruitment is about ensuring that only people suitable to work with children and adults at risk, become part of the workforce.
- A Recruitment Sub-Committee to risk assess potential volunteers and paid staff, who have convictions on their PVG Scheme Record. This process demonstrates safe recruitment practice and it ensures that those with criminal offences that do not affect their suitability for the particular post can be safely employed.
- Safeguarding training programmes to meet the particular learning needs of different groups of people in the Church e.g. volunteers, Kirk Sessions, Safeguarding Coordinators, Ministries Council staff and CrossReach employees.

Responding to disclosures of harm or abuse, or risk of abuse

The Safeguarding Service:

- Provides verbal and written advice in situations where harm or abuse is witnessed, suspected or reported to members of the Church and CrossReach Social Care Council services. This work is called managing safeguarding referrals.
- Advises and works alongside Safeguarding Panels working with those who pose a risk to ensure their safe inclusion in worship. The Church has a rigorous system of support and monitoring in place based on the use of Covenants of Responsibilities - written and regularly reviewed agreements - between those who pose a risk and the congregation.

Often this involves joint working with Criminal Justice Social Work services and/or the police. Details of how to Contact the Safeguarding Service can be found at the back of this handbook.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Presbytery

The Presbytery is responsible for ensuring that Kirk Sessions adhere to the Safeguarding Act 2018 and implement the Church's Safeguarding Policy. Presbytery is also responsible for ensuring Kirk Sessions adhere to good Safeguarding Practice through the submission of the Safeguarding Audit Checklist and Safeguarding Congregational Register via the Annual Attestation of Records. The latest version of these documents are available on the Church of Scotland Website.

The Presbytery also has a responsibility to ensure effective communications about safeguarding matters. Safeguarding should appear as a standing item on one of the Presbytery Committees.

Additionally Presbyteries are responsible for appointing Safeguarding Trainers and a Safeguarding Presbytery Contact to coordinate safeguarding training – details of these responsibilities can be found in Safeguarding Handbook 3.

The Role and Responsibilities of The Kirk Session

Kirk Sessions are responsible for implementing the instructions of the Church's General Assembly and ensuring

that their congregations adhere to them. The detail of these duties and General Assembly Deliverances can be found in the Safeguarding Act 2018, which was accepted by the General Assembly in May 2018. The Safeguarding Act clarifies what is required of Congregations, Councils and others to ensure that Safeguarding standards are achieved, monitored and reviewed. The Safeguarding Service has also written guidance to sit alongside the Act which is available on the public website.

In the terms of secular law the Elders comprising the Kirk Session are Trustees, with all the duties and responsibilities of that role; i.e. they are responsible, amongst other things, for appointing, managing, resourcing, and supporting sufficient numbers of suitable personnel to run the services they wish provided. The Kirk Session is, therefore, responsible for any decisions made on its behalf for example decisions of the safeguarding panel, safeguarding coordinator. It is therefore important that the session is aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and appoint these important roles with care and diligence.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Coordinator

All Kirk Sessions must appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and this must always be formally minuted by the Kirk Session.

Kirk Sessions may wish to recruit and appoint more than one Safeguarding Coordinator. This allows the workload to be shared and also helps to maintain continuity if one of them retires or leaves.

The Safeguarding Coordinator is formally recruited and appointed to act on behalf of (not instead of) their Kirk Session, to help to ensure that the Safeguarding Act, i.e. the instructions, recommendations and legislation relating to Safeguarding practice in the Church, is implemented. See Safeguarding Handbook 2 for guidance on the recruitment process.

Kirk Sessions should ensure that the Congregation knows who their Safeguarding Coordinator is and what their role is. The Safeguarding Coordinator should report regularly to the Kirk Session. Safeguarding should be a standing item on the Kirk Session's agenda. You will find the full job description for the Safeguarding Coordinator in Appendix 5.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Panel

A Safeguarding Panel is a group of at least three people appointed by the Kirk Session to manage Safeguarding matters on its behalf. The appointment of the Safeguarding Panel should also be minuted and every congregation must have one. The suggested membership of a Panel is:

- The Safeguarding Coordinator
- The Minister
- One or two other Church members with relevant experience

There should be at least three Safeguarding Panel members but there can be more to include key relevant people. Occasionally the Minister decides not to be involved in the Safeguarding Panel because it may compromise their pastoral care role. Many congregations include their Session Clerk as a member of the Safeguarding Panel too. In practice Safeguarding Panels meet as and when required. They must be able to meet at short notice when there is a Safeguarding incident.

The Safeguarding Panel will:

- Assist the Safeguarding Coordinator with managing a Safeguarding situation in the congregation. Often this will include taking forward actions recommended by the Safeguarding Service
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinator with the 'safe recruitment' of volunteers to work with children or adult at risk in congregations.
- Consider how to manage a situation where an applicant is not suitable to work with children or adults.
- Ensure that the congregation complies with safeguarding policies and the implementation of the Safeguarding Act 2018.

- Consider how to promote good Safeguarding practice and awareness raising training.
- Ensure that procedures are followed and records maintained to the satisfaction of the Presbytery.
- Ensure safe arrangements for managing those who pose a risk who wish to attend worship in the congregation. It is recognised that not all individual members of a Safeguarding Panel may feel comfortable with this particular task - it is up to the individual. For more details on the policy and procedures for working with those that pose a risk see Safeguarding Handbook 5 "Managing Those Who Pose a Risk".

Safeguarding Panel members should attend Safeguarding training to equip them with the knowledge and skills for their role. More information on appropriate training can be found in Safeguarding Handbook 3.

It is very important that Safeguarding Panels keep a written/electronic record of their decisions, the reasons for those decisions, fact finding reports and notes of actions taken. These records must be kept in accordance with the Church of Scotland Data Retention Policy on the Church of Scotland website.

Records should always be stored in a secure and confidential place. If records are stored electronically then care should be taken to ensure the network is secure and the records are password protected.

In the event of an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Safeguarding Panel members must keep the information confidential. This also means that details about allegations or concerns of abuse/harm will not usually be discussed at Kirk Session meetings. The Safeguarding Service will advise the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Panel in relation to information which can/should be shared.

Role and Responsibilities of the Minister

The Church requires that Ministers must:

- Be aware of the Church's safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Attend an in-service Safeguarding Training Day as a candidate.
- Become a member of the PVG Scheme.

The Minister's role is to help the Kirk Session and Safeguarding Coordinator fulfil their safeguarding remit and to establish good pastoral practice for the care and support of Church members whose lives are (or have been) affected by harm and/or abuse. Ministers may also be members of Safeguarding Panels.

Ministers who have to manage disclosures of abuse (both current and historical) should initially discuss them with their Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Panel for support and advice. Similarly the Safeguarding Service must be contacted.

How to contact the Safeguarding Service

The service is available 9.00am-5.00 pm, Monday to Friday. You can leave a telephone or email message out with this time. If your concern is very urgent- e.g. serious harm or abuse has happened, a crime has occurred or the person is in immediate danger please contact the police or social work services directly.

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service

The Church of Scotland
121 George Street
Edinburgh EH2 4YN

Tel: 0131 240 2256

Email: safeguarding@churchofscotland.org.uk

Website: www.churchofscotland.org.uk

APPENDIX 1

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Ensuring a Safe Church for All

The Church of Scotland has a deep concern for the wholeness and well-being of each individual. Through its congregations, working together with the Safeguarding Service and statutory agencies, the Church seeks to safeguard the welfare of all people who come into contact with the Church and its services.

The Gospel proclaims that it is the responsibility of everyone within the fellowship of the Church to prevent harm, be it physical, sexual or emotional, and we will always seek to reduce risk.

The Church's commitment to safeguarding reminds us that God cares passionately about the welfare and well-being of all people.

APPENDIX 2

Code of Good Safeguarding Practice

Background

The Church of Scotland Code of Good Safeguarding Practice 2011 has been revised in 2018 to take account of any changes to Safeguarding Policy and Practice.

What is the code of good Safeguarding Practice?

In short it is a checklist, or set of standards, of what good safeguarding practice looks like.

This Code of Practice is for all paid staff and volunteers in the Church who have a responsibility for organising, managing or providing care and support to children and adults at risk.

The 'Church' means congregations, all Ministries and CrossReach services.

This Code of Good Safeguarding Practice will ensure that all those within the Church who work with children and adults at risk follow the same standards of safeguarding practice. It demonstrates a commitment by the Church to the safety, well-being and care of children and adults at risk. This Code is a working document and, unlike the Safeguarding Policy Statement, not for display in Church buildings or CrossReach services.

This is what the Church expects to see in place:

Code of Good Safeguarding Practice 2018

Policy

1. The Church of Scotland is committed to '*Ensuring a Safe Church for All*'. Use and display The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Policy Statement agreed by the General Assembly, May 2010.
2. Paid staff and volunteers, through the provision of safe and appropriate standards of care, will minimise the likelihood of harmful situations occurring.
3. The Church will respond to the needs of victims of harm or abuse as appropriate and ensure as far as possible, that the person feels safe in the Church community.

Recognising and reporting harm or abuse

4. The Church has clear written procedures for responding to witnessed, suspected or reported harm or abuse. These can be found in The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service's Key Publications available on the Church of Scotland's website at www.churchofscotland.org.uk. The Church's key message about recognising and reporting harm or abuse is:

If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or, for CrossReach services, your line manager.

5. Paid staff and volunteers in the Church will use the 4 Rs of Safeguarding: being able to *recognise* harm or abuse, ensuring that it is *reported* to the Safeguarding Coordinator or Line Manager, *recording* the details in writing and *referring* on to social work and the police in appropriate cases.
6. Confidentiality: information about a person who has allegedly been harmed, or is at risk of serious harm, can be shared without their permission if they, or others, are at risk of serious harm.

Safe recruitment and management

7. Every congregation must have a formally recruited Safeguarding Coordinator.
(Some congregations may choose to have more than one to share the work and responsibility).
8. All paid staff and volunteers working with children or protected adults, as defined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, must be formally and safely recruited. This means:
 - Every post must have a written job description.
 - Applicants must be interviewed, provide two references (which must be followed up), and also have a PVG Scheme Record (Scotland) or DBS Certificate (England, Channel Islands and Wales) and have been cleared by the Safeguarding Service to take up regulated work or regulated activities.
 - It is an offence for organisations to employ individuals whose name appears on a barred list.
 - Recruiting individuals who were born outside the UK or who have lived outside the UK to undertake regulated work with children or protected adults. There are two issues to consider in this situation. The first is confirming someone's identity by ensuring robust recruitment practices are in place and that suitable references are pursued and the second is ensuring that appropriate police checks have been undertaken in the country they were born and or resided. The onus is on the individual to provide details of their criminal conviction history from their home country or countries of previous residence.
 - All volunteers should receive one-to-one supervision with the person to whom they are responsible.
 - All volunteers and paid staff should attend Church of Scotland safeguarding training as meets the needs of the post holder. Training is mandatory for those undertaking regulated work. More information about training courses can be found at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/safeguarding_service/training.
 - All paid staff and volunteers, with suitable training and support, must be able to recognise harm and abuse and be confident enough to report it to their Safeguarding Coordinator or, for CrossReach services, their line manager.
 - If allegations of harm against a paid member of staff are found to be unsubstantiated but there are good grounds for believing that the person continues to pose a risk, 'compromise agreements' should not be used to end the person's employment. A compromise agreement is where a person agrees to resign, the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference. A referral may need to be made to Disclosure Scotland in respect of the individual.
 - Paid and volunteer posts should have a Code of Conduct so that workers are clear about expected behaviour (what is said and done and to ensure appropriate boundaries between themselves and children and adults at risk).

Working with sex offenders known to congregations

9. For congregations: when it is known or suspected that there is a convicted sex offender in the congregation, or someone under investigation for sexual offences, this information must be reported to The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service. The Safeguarding Service will then provide full advice and support with setting up a Covenant of Responsibilities to ensure the person's safe inclusion in the life of the Church.

Responsibilities

10. Employees and volunteers of the Church are strongly recommended to follow verbal and written advice provided by the Church's Safeguarding Service in cases where harm is witnessed, suspected or reported.
11. Every congregation must appoint a Safeguarding Panel. This can comprise of the Minister, the Safeguarding

- Coordinator plus one or more other people with a suitable understanding, or professional background in safeguarding. Some congregations may choose not to have the Minister on the Safeguarding Panel as this could present a conflict of interests if pastoral support is also required for the victim and/or the perpetrator.
12. Kirk Sessions will ensure that all paid staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk know what the Church's safeguarding policy is and receive appropriate safeguarding training.
 13. An appropriate level of safeguarding training will be provided for Presbytery Safeguarding Trainers, Safeguarding Coordinators, Kirk Sessions, Presbytery and Parish Workers and paid staff and volunteers in congregations and all staff in CrossReach services.

APPENDIX 3

Legislation and Further Guidance

Child Protection

- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014 and Getting it right for Every Child available at:
- www.gov.scot
- www.nspcc.org.uk
- Information on legislation relating to child protection including the Children Scotland Act 1995, Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011

Adult Support and Protection

- To find out more about legislation referring to Adult Support and Protection refer to www.gov.scot
- <https://www.elderabuse.org.uk/in-scotland>
- <http://www.careinspectorate.com/>

APPENDIX 4

Historical (Non-recent Abuse) Policy and Procedure

1. Policy statement

This policy is about how the Church aims to respond to the needs of survivors of historical abuse.

The Church will:

1. Seek to ensure that there is a sensitive and effective response for survivors reporting any type of historical abuse perpetrated by a Church office bearer/employee in a Church activity, or by another service user in a social care service provided by CrossReach (Social Care Council).
2. Treat all disclosures of historical abuse seriously.
3. Offer the survivor the opportunity to be heard and listened to.
4. Ensure that where disclosures allege criminal activity, and/or there is an on-going risk of significant harm to the survivor, a child or adult, this information will be shared with the police or other public authorities.

2. Procedure

The procedure provides a framework for responding to reported historical abuse. Steps will not always happen in this exact sequence. The process could end at any stage.

1. Disclosure

The process starts with a report of historical abuse by a survivor, or other person, about the harmful conduct by a person as defined in 1.1 above. The disclosure may relate to any organised activity or service-provision in the Church or in a current, or past, CrossReach service.

2. Safeguarding procedure

Historical abuse should be referred to the Safeguarding Service using the established safeguarding procedure for all reported harm. Basic information will be required about what happened, where, when and who was involved. The police, or other public authority, will take the lead role with investigation. Appropriate senior staff in the Church Offices or CrossReach will be advised about the disclosure.

3. Initial Risk Assessment

The Safeguarding Service will do an initial risk assessment to determine if the information disclosed needs to be shared with the police or other public authorities.

4. Sharing Information with the Police

When a disclosure suggests that a crime has been committed, the Church's standard practice will be to share this information with the police. The Church has a duty to contribute to public protection. Sometimes the survivor may be at risk of on-going harm or another child or adult may currently be at risk of significant harm.

In the first instance, the survivor will be encouraged to do this for themselves. Where the survivor does not want to, or is not able to do this, the relevant Church department/council or The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service will share this information. But the survivor retains control – they do not have to speak with the police unless they want to. The police will decide what to do with the information e.g. note it for information or make further investigations.

5. Being heard and responding to the needs of survivors

“The greatest thing you can give a survivor is acknowledgement, not sympathy but acknowledgement”

If appropriate, the survivor will have the opportunity to speak to a member of staff from the Safeguarding Service. The member of staff can provide initial support and advice to the individual and assist in signposting them to the most appropriate services to meet their needs.

3. Summary

The Church will be receptive to the needs of survivors and will give them an opportunity to be heard. The policy and procedure provides a structure and process for this to happen. The measures of success will be the outcomes for survivors.

The Safeguarding Committee will regularly monitor and review this policy and procedure.

APPENDIX 5

Job description for a Safeguarding Coordinator

Title of Post: Safeguarding Coordinator

Congregation Name:

Responsible to: The Kirk Session

Main purpose: to ensure that the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Act 2018 is effectively implemented in the congregation.

Principal duties and responsibilities:

- Be the recognised person for receiving reports of any witnessed, suspected or reported harm or abuse of children or adults at risk and be responsible for liaison with social work and/or the police in any further action taken.
- Promote and facilitate safe working practices by providing information on risk management and the protection of children and adults at risk from abuse/harm.
- Ensure that all:
- Pastoral Care Team workers visiting vulnerable adults and children's workers are safely recruited (PVG checked) and recorded in the Congregational register.
- Appointments of children's workers are ratified by the Kirk Session and recorded in the Congregational Register.
- Managing the process in congregations for volunteers to become members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act, 2007 Scheme – guidance available from the Safeguarding Service.
- Maintain accurate and confidential records of all children's workers and Pastoral Care Team workers and ensure that these are securely stored.

- Promote training opportunities for those doing regulated work with children and adults at risk. (Guidance is available about what is meant by regulated work under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act, 2007.)
- Monitor the continuing implementation of the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Act 2018, by all groups and organisations under the jurisdiction of the Kirk Session.
- Liaise with individuals responsible for the lets and hires of Church premises to Non-Church of Scotland groups to ensure compliance with contracts agreed by the Kirk Session.
- Report to every meeting of the Kirk Session on Safeguarding issues.
- May also be part of the Safeguarding Panel that monitors the safe inclusion of a convicted sex offender in the congregation. Not all Safeguarding Coordinators will feel comfortable with this particular task and their involvement is not mandatory.

Skills and experience required for the post:

- current or previous professional or voluntary experience, and hence a good understanding of child and/or adult support and protection.

APPENDIX 6

Structure of the Report

1. Executive summary	The main points, findings and conclusion summarised for quick reading.
2. Purpose of the report.	Clearly identify the remit . Agree this with the person commissioning the report and get it in writing. Is it just to report findings (what happened) or to make recommendations (what needs to be done to address the findings)?
3. The process of producing the report	Details about who has written it and the process e.g. who was interviewed and when, supporting information such as the write-ups of the interviews, other agencies who contributed, examination of case records and files, telephone calls etc.
4. Two or three key questions for the investigation to address	It is useful to identify 2 or 4 key questions for the investigation to address . Write them down. This helps to maintain the focus and ensures that at the conclusion, the investigation achieves what it set out to do.
5. Background and contextual information	Brief history of the circumstances and back- ground leading up to the incident.
6. Detailed description of the alleged harmful event.	Write this up in detail. Sources will include interviews with the reported victim, staff, witnesses and significant others . What happened before, during and after the event?
7. Assessment of the impact of the alleged harmful event on the reported victim.	Identify the emotional, psychological, social and physical impact on the reported victim e.g. withdrawal, injuries, changes in mood and behaviour that are out of character, effect on mental health and relationships, impact of loss of property or money etc.
8. Chronology of events, actions and decisions. This is a key tool .	Insert a two-column table that briefly summarises (1) the main events and what happened, who was involved and where and (2) when with day, date and time. This enables an at-a-glance summary of events and can be used like a map to find your way around the report. (Otherwise it is too easy to lose track of what happened, who was involved and when).
9. The facts that were established.	State what facts were established using your 2-4 key questions. What can you say happened with (1) certainty (2) is likely to have happened on the 'balance of probabilities' or for which 'there are reasonable grounds for belief' or (3) did not happen because there is no evidence to support it? Separately identify corroborated, uncorroborated and disputed statements or facts.
10. Possible explanations for key questions 1 to 3.	Suggest possible explanations based on the above section.
11. Additional findings .	Opportunity to make other observations that may be strictly outwith the original remit but have emerged and are relevant
12. Action Plan	Who will do what by when, resources needed and arrangements for review to ensure that change will be lasting.

How to contact the Safeguarding Service

The service is available 9.00am-5.00pm, Monday to Friday. You can leave a telephone or email message outwith this time.

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service
The Church of Scotland
121 George Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4YN
Tel: 0131 240 2256
Email: safeguarding@churchofscotland.org.uk

 facebook.com/churchofscotland

 [@churchscotland](https://twitter.com/churchscotland)

Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

www.churchofscotland.org.uk